



**3 NUTRITION SERVICES**

*Effective: 12/1/95*

**3.35 Nutrition Education: Techniques and Cultural and Linguistic Considerations**

*Revised: 4/1/03*

**POLICY:** Nutrition education must be designed to be easily understood by participants, to meet different cultural and language needs, and to bear a practical relationship to nutritional needs, household situation, and cultural preferences, including information on how to select food for themselves and their families.

**PROCEDURE:**

**A. PARTICIPANT-CENTERED COUNSELING**

Participant-centered counseling techniques must be utilized, as appropriate. Such counseling includes: highlighting at least one positive thing the mother is doing to feed herself or her child, presentation of a single concept, a practice activity, positive feedback, and an opportunity for questions and answers. In single concept counseling, the CPA/nutritionist determines the most appropriate topic (based on the nutrition assessment), presents the necessary information, and conducts an activity in which the participant demonstrates what s/he learned (e.g. how to incorporate high iron foods into a typical day's menu). If the participant successfully completes the practice activity and there is still sufficient time (and the participant is interested), another topic may be presented. The counselor should provide the participant with positive feedback whenever possible since this lets the participant know what s/he is doing correctly and helps them stay more interested in learning. (Note: the WIC Certification and Secondary Education Guidelines present information to be offered; it is not expected that each WIC participant receive all of the information at one visit).

**B. APPROPRIATE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS**

(see also Policy 3.36)

1. Nutrition education materials should be appropriate for the participant (e.g., reading level, ethnic considerations). These should be used to enhance, not replace, nutrition counseling. The use of food models, posters, and brochures are recommended to reinforce key points, use in the practice activity, and/or to take with them as reminders. Materials should not be passed out indiscriminately (generally no more than one to three pieces of literature).
2. Monthly newsletters are recommended. As with other nutrition education materials, these should have a professional, uncluttered appearance and be appropriate for the target population (e.g., reading level, ethnic considerations). Projects are encouraged to co-develop and share nutrition articles with other WIC projects. It is also recommended to share newsletters with other agencies/programs as appropriate.



**NOTES:**

Available resources:

- \* Eliaades DC, Suitor CW: Celebrating Diversity: Approaching Families Through Their Food. Arlington, VA: National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health, 1994. (distributed by USDA to WIC Projects in 1994)
- \* Motivational Negotiation, Feeding Relationship, and Counseling Families of Overweight Children Reference and Sample Dialogue Sheets. (distributed to WIC Projects in 2003)
- \* USDA/USDHHS: Cross-Cultural Counseling: A Guide for Nutrition and Health Counselors, September, 1986. (The number of copies available to the State WIC Office was limited; hopefully was ordered and distributed by Regional Offices in 1986.)